Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01185 151844Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------027121 160710Z /16
R 151719Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4760
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEH HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1185

EXDIS

BRUSSELS FOR USEC; PARIS FOR OECD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO EEC PO
SUBJ: CONSULTATIONS WITH NATO ALLIES

REF: STATE 28167

1. BACKGROUND: THE PORTUGUESE RECOGNIZE THAT ALL NATO ALLIES ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS. THEIR LONG INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICAN COLONIAL WARS; THEIR ISOLATED GEOGRAPHIC POSITION; AND THEIR SMALL SIZE--ALL COMBINE TO REDUCE PORTUGUESE EXPECTATIONS, OF, AND EXPERIENCE WITH NATO'S CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY.

2. THE SITUATION IS SLOWLY CHANGING. PORTUGAL'S DEMOCRATIC
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PAGE 02 LISBON 01185 151844Z

GOVERNMENT DESIRES CLOSERNATO TIES, INCLUDING CONSULTATION WHEN APPROPRIATE. THE PORTUGUESE RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT IN MANY AREAS THEY HAVE LITTLE TO CONTRIBUTE IN ALLIANCE COUNSELS. STILL, WE BELIEVE THEY SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED REALISTICALLY.

3. SPECIFIC CASES: SINCE THE OVERTHROW OF THE

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DICTATORSHIP IN 1974, TWO NATO FORUMS PARTICULARLY
AFFECTED PORTUGAL. THE ACTIONS WERE DIFFERENT, REFLECT-
ING THE CONTRADICTORY NATURE OF PORTUGESE EVENTS.

(A) NPG: PORTUGAL HAS BEEN DENIED ACCESS TO CERTAIN
KINDS OF NATO CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS, BECAUSE OF DEFICIENCIES IN
LISBON'S SECURITY APPARATUS. THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY
HAVE NOT BEEN HAPPY WITH THEIR EXCLUSION, BUT UNDERSTAND
THE REASONS FOR IT.

(B) AD HOC COMMITTEE: AN AD HOC NATO COMMITTEE WAS SET
UP TO COORDINATE ALLIANCE ACTIONS ON PORTUGAL'S (AND
TURKEY'S) FORCE MODERNIZATION PROPOSALS. FORCE MODERNIZA-
TION IS PORTUGAL'S PRINCIPAL NATO CONCERN BY A WIDE MARGIN,
AND THE COMMITTEE HAS SERVED A USEFUL PURPOSE IN
KEEPING PORTUGUESE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE THE ALLIES.

4. SPAIN/NATO: THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE ON THE HORIZON WHICH
THE PORTUGUESE VIEW AS AFFECTING THEM DIRECTLY
IS POSSIBLE SANISH ENTRY INTO NATO.SUCH ENTRY WOULD
AFFECT NATO COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS IN IBERIA AS WELL AS
A WHOLE HOST OF SPANISH-PORTUGUESE ISSUES. THE GOP WOULD
UNDOUBTEDLY EXPECT TO BE KEPT CLOSELY INFORMED OF
DEVELPMENTS IN THIS AREA. THEY WOULD EXPECT TO
PARTICIPATE IN ANY NEW FORUMS RE SPAIN/NATO. EMBASSY
LISBON BELIEVES THIS IS REASONABLE.
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5.CONCLUSION: IN SUM, THE PORTUGUESE ARE NOT
LIKELY TO RAISE PROBLEMS ON CONSULTATIONS. THEY WILL
ALMOST CERTAINLY FOLLOW WHATEVER CONSENSUS EMERGES ON
THIS ISSUE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE.
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20 Mar 2014
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